

Please amend the claims as follows:

CLAIMS

There is claimed:

1. (Currently amended) Device-(8) for protecting objects-(7) placed inside the rear boot-(2) of a motor vehicle bearing a foldaway roof-(1) movable between a deployed position in which it covers the passenger compartment of the vehicle, and a folded, stored position in which it is stored and retracted in the boot-(2) closed with a hood-(5), the device-(8) comprising a panel-(9) forming the vertical limit between a protected zone-(10) of the boot-(2) used to receive the objects-(7) and accessible when the boot-(2) is open from the rear forward, and a second zone-(11) of the boot (2) used to receive the roof-(1) in the folded, stored position and located above the protected zone-(10), the panel-(9) being moveable between at least a low protecting position in which the protected zone-(10) fills a first volume which is free when the boot-(2) is closed and the roof-(1) is in its folded, stored position, and a high protecting position in which the protected zone-(10) fills a second volume which is free when the boot-(2) is closed and the roof-(1) is in its deployed position, first-(12) and second-(13) securing means being used to respectively lock the panel-(9) in its low protecting position and in its high protecting position, the panel-(9) in the low protecting position being used to co-operate with a first sensor-(14) so as to authorise the folding of the roof-(1), wherein the co-operation of the panel-(9) with the first sensor-(14) is such that, when the panel-(9) is higher than the low protecting position, the roof-(1) can not be folded, and in that the co-operation of the panel-(9) with a second sensor-(15) is such that, when the panel-(9) is higher than the high protecting position, the boot-(2) can not be closed.

2. (Currently amended) Device-(8) set forth in claim 1, wherein an arm-(16) is attached to each lateral side of the panel-(9) in a movable manner in the transversal direction to the vehicle, each arm-(16) comprising a stub-(17) projecting transversally towards the outside of the protected zone-(10), an anchorage element-(18) integral with the body-(6) comprises a first opening-(18) in which the first sensor-(14) is housed, the stub-(17) being used to penetrate into the first opening-(18) in order to lock the panel-(9) in its low protecting position and to actuate the first sensor-(14).

3. (Currently amended) Device set forth in claim 2, wherein each stub-(17) at the lower end of the corresponding arm-(16), which extends towards the bottom of the boot-(2) and which is attached in a flexible manner to the panel-(9), is constantly solicited in the direction of the corresponding anchorage element-(19).

4. (Currently amended) Device set forth in claim 2-~~or~~ 3, wherein each anchorage element-(19) comprises a second opening-(20) in which the second sensor-(15) is housed, the stub-(17) being used to penetrate into the second opening (20) in order to lock the panel-(9) in its high protecting position and to actuate the second sensor-(15).

5. (Currently amended) Protective device set forth in ~~one of~~ claims 1 to 4~~2~~, wherein, when the roof-(1) is in its deployed position and the boot-(2) is open from the rear forward, the panel-(9) can be placed in a high introductory position above the high protecting position so as to facilitate the placing of luggage-(7) in the protected zone-(10).

6. (Currently amended) Protective device set forth in claim 5, wherein third securing means-(24) are used to lock the panel-(9) in its high introductory position.

7. (Currently amended) Device set forth in claim 6 ~~dependent on claim 2~~, wherein the anchorage element-(19) comprises a third opening-(22) in which the stub-(17) is used to penetrate in order to lock the panel-(9) in its high introductory position.

8. (Currently amended) Protective device set forth in ~~one of~~ claims 1 to 7~~2~~, the vehicle being fitted with a device used to facilitate the placing of objects-(7) under the roof-(1) by guiding it from its folded, stored position to a folded, raised position in which the boot-(2) is open from the rear forward and the roof-(1) at least partially projecting out of the boot-(2), wherein, when the roof-(1) is in its folded, raised position and the boot-(2) is open from the rear forward, the panel-(9) can be moved into a low introductory position beyond the low protecting position so as to facilitate the placing of luggage-(7) in the protected zone-(10), the co-operation of the panel-(9) with the first sensor-(14) being such that, when the panel (9) is higher than the low protecting position, the roof-(1) can not be lowered and the boot-(2) can not be closed.

9. (Currently amended) Device set forth in claim 8, wherein fourth securing means ~~(23)~~ are used to lock the panel ~~(9)~~ in its low introductory position.

10. (Currently amended) Device set forth in claim 9 ~~dependent on claim 2~~, wherein the anchorage element ~~(19)~~ comprises a fourth opening ~~(24)~~ in which the stub ~~(17)~~ is used to penetrate in order to lock the panel ~~(9)~~ in its low introductory position.